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FM AMEMBASSY ULAANBAATAR
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1729
INFO RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 1653
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5892
RUEHHI/AMEMBASSY HANOI 0091
RUEHJA/AMEMBASSY JAKARTA 0212
RUEHML/AMEMBASSY MANILA 1558
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 2007
RUEHPF/AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH 0054
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 3077
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 0371
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2772
RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 0060
RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG 0401
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0354
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP WASHDC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0544
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ULAANBAATAR 000693

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STATE DEPT FOR EAP/CM, EAP/K, G/TIP AND G/SENK

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TAGS: [PREF](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [ECON](#) [MG](#) [KN](#)

SUBJECT: IOM'S ENGAGEMENT WITH MONGOLIA INCREASING

Classified By: Ambassador Mark C. Minton for Reason 1.4(d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: Charles Harns, Regional Representative for the International Organization for Migration (IOM), called on the DCM and E/P Chief on December 13, described IOM's increasing activity in Mongolia and said the country had informed the IOM of its intention to join the organization in June. Harns said the GOM was seeking assistance on border security, identity management, in-country visa processing, internal migration and detention/deportation facilities. This was in addition to the ongoing training that IOM is providing to help GOM officials identify victims of trafficking in persons. Harns said the GOM had asked for IOM's view on whether North Koreans who reach Mongolia en route to resettlement elsewhere should be regarded as refugees or economic migrants. ("Primarily as refugees," was Harns' assessment.) Harns said the IOM was hoping to soon open a full-time office in Ulaanbaatar. He indicated that a technical cooperation framework agreement would be concluded between the IOM and the GOM. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) IOM Regional Rep Charles Harns called on the DCM and E/P Chief December 13, described IOM's increasing activity in Mongolia and said the country had informed the IOM of its intention to join the organization in June. Harns added that the IOM was hoping to open a full-time office soon because "we're reaching a critical mass." (The IOM's current point-person in Mongolia is based in the former Yugoslavia and makes frequent visits, usually lasting one week.)

ENGAGEMENT ACROSS MANY FRONTS

13. (C) Harns described IOM-GOM engagement as currently focused on helping GOM officials identify victims of trafficking in persons. (Note: On December 13, 30 GOM officials underwent IOM training for this purpose. End Note.) He said the IOM and GOM plan to cooperate across a broad range of issues, including the following.

-- Border Security: Mongolia has requested assistance to strengthen its border communications and equipment, and establish 24/7 access to Interpol data;

-- Identity Management: The GOM seeks assistance to review and consolidate its civil registry and other systems for documenting individuals. Said Harns: "There are too many documents out there and it's hard to know what's what, and what's real."

-- In-country visa processing: The system through which foreigners get visas renewed is flawed, and a hotline is necessary. The GOM's "data archiving is good on a paper level," but needs to be digitized. "We need to connect the data streams."

-- Internal migration: With many rural Mongolians migrating to Ulaanbaatar and other cities, the GOM wants IOM help in assessing the numbers, impacts and options. "There's no magic wand," said Harns. Fortunately, "The GOM is not about to try any forced movements."

-- Detention/deportation facility for foreigners: The GOM is building a new facility in Ulaanbaatar. Harns said the IOM, which has assistance on this issue in Albania, Moldova and Ukraine, would offer its support, although the IOM doesn't deport anyone.

14. (C) Harns indicated that a technical cooperation framework agreement (covering all issues above except for internal migration) was to be concluded between the IOM and the GOM. This, he said, will result in a number of different projects,

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many of them focused on training.

ARE NORTH KOREANS "REFUGEES"?

15. (C) Harns, based in Manila, was scheduled to meet with Mongolia's Justice, Foreign and Labor ministers during his visit. He said the GOM had asked IOM's advice about whether to regard North Korean asylum seekers as refugees or economic migrants. Harns said the IOM views such individuals primarily as refugees, because of the danger they would face if they were returned home. Said Harns: "In my view, if Mongolia starts calling them 'refugees' (instead of 'humanitarian cases'), it wouldn't hurt China-Mongolia relations." He described the Mongolians as increasingly resigned to the need to start recognizing the DPRK migrants as "refugees." In his view, the number of DPRK refugees reaching Mongolia is unlikely to change dramatically in the absence of major changes in North Korea or its borders. He said he doubted whether, if asked, the IOM would grant membership to North Korea, "given the situation there," but that "we would engage them on a less formal level." Harns added: "I hope we'll get to that point, and there are some encouraging signs, including the new rail link and indications that the nuclear program will be halted."

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